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SELECTED CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS RELEVANT TO THE STUDY OF FERTILITY, MORTALITY AND MIGRATION

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Introduction

1. The objectives of this paper are to discuss and evaluate concepts, definitions and classifications relevant to the study of fertility, mortality and migration in Africa with a view to improving data collection efforts. Except for special concepts, no attempt has been made to provide definitions, because these have been adequately covered elsewhere. 1/

2. More specifically, the approach adopted in this paper consists of reviews and critical evaluations of the usages and adaptations of fertility, mortality and migration concepts and classifications in Africa especially those employed during the course of data collection.

A. Concepts, Definitions and Classifications: Fertility

3. The selected concepts, definitions and classifications on fertility that will be examined in this section, are as follows:

- Number of children ever born alive;
- Births occurring in a specified recent period usually 12 or 24 months preceding the census or survey;
- Date of last live birth.

These questions are usually addressed to females 12 years of age and above in the majority of African countries. Other respondents that have been used for these questions include.

- females 10 years of age and above [Liberia (1974) and Malawi (1977)]
- females 15 years of age and above [Gambia (1983) Lesotho (1976) and Swaziland (1976)]
- married, widowed and divorced women [Egypt (1976) Central African Republic (1975) and Tunisia (1975)]
- females born in 1964 and before (i.e. approximately 13 years of age and above at the time of the census) (Mauritania (1976)
- women under 55 years not reported as single [Mauritius (1972)]

Congo (1974) and Burundi (1979) used both the age limit 12 years and above as well as a de jure classification of women i.e. those who were usual residents whether present or temporarily absent.

1/ See for example, United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, (New York: 1980) ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/67; United Nations, Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System (New York 1973) ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/19; United Nations, Methods of Measuring Internal Migration, (New York:1974) Population Studies No. 47 and E. Van de Walle, Multinational Demographic Dictionary: English section (Leige, Belgium: International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, 1982 2nd ed).

Number of children ever born alive

4. This is the most common question included in African censuses and surveys in recent years. It also featured in the censuses and surveys of the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1973 National Demographic Survey of Tanzania and the Kenya World Fertility Survey, a question on this topic was also included.

5. Some differences could be discerned about the phrasing and design of this question. In some countries (e.g. Angola (1981), Cameroon (1976), Congo (1974), Central African Republic (1975), Gabon (1980) and Somalia (1975) the question was asked in terms of the total number of children ever born and the total number either alive or dead, classified by sex. In others (e.g. Botswana (1981) Burundi (1979), Gambia (1983), Kenya (1979), Sierra Leone (1974), Tunisia (1975) and Lesotho (1976) the question asked in the new form i.e. the total number of children born alive was classified into the three categories: (a) living in the household, (b) living away from the household and (c) dead. In addition, some countries (e.g. Gambia, Kenya and Lesotho) required that the children in the three categories be classified by sex.

6. The main shortcoming of the information on the number of children ever born alive is that on the average it is under reported.2/ Omissions occur more regularly, it seems, to children borne who die soon after birth; those not living in the household at the time of the interview; and those born of a husband other than the current one. In particular, it has been noted that the average number of children increases very gradually at ages of women thirty or thirty-five and sometimes decreases at ages forty-five or fifty. This strongly points to omission of children by older women.

7. The question is also susceptible to over reporting, 3/ though on a reduced scale, because sometimes still births are reported as children who die in infancy. Overreporting can also occur for children borne by another wife to the current husband, adopted children and grandchildren.

8. However, the problem of dating births that bedevils fertility measures pertaining to a recent period is absent here.

Births within preceding 12 or 24 months

9. This questions has been experimented with in most of the surveys conducted under French auspices in Western and Central Africa. Recently the question has featured in the census questionnaires of, for example, Botswana (1981), Cameroon (1976), Congo (1974), Liberia (1974), Mali (1976), Mauritania (1976/77) and Somalia (1975).

2/ United Nations, Methods of Estimating Basic Demographic Measures from Incomplete Data: (New York, 1967), Population Studies No. 42, Manual IV, Chapter II.

3/ Committee on Population and Demography, Collecting Data for the Estimation of Fertility and Mortality (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1981) P. 220.

10. The question was usually directed to women 12 years of age and above or other age classes and categories enumerated for the question on children ever born. However in Cameroon (1976) Burundi (1979) and Comoros (1980) the question was asked in terms of births in the household instead of births to women.

11. It is the opinion of some authors that births to women is a more concrete concept than births in the household: "Births to women represent a clear and manageable de facto concept. Alternative units of reference could obviously cause biases of predictable kinds ... If the household is the unit, events in dissolved households risk being omitted or counted twice". 4/

12. Also, there were exceptions to the use of the 12 months reference period. In Mauritania (1976/77) the question referred to births that occurred within the interval of the feast of AID, which comprised the muslim lunar year. The period does not add up to exactly 12 months.

13. Similarly in Somalia (1975), the reference time period was less than a year, as it was stated to be "since the last muslim feast of AID", about seven months to the census. Also in Botswana (1981) the question was in this form: "How many children have been born alive since independence?" This comprised a period of 10½ months.

14. Cameroon (1976) adopted a novel approach to the phrasing of this question. Twelve months were the reference intervals; but in order that the enumerator (and through him the respondents) clearly recalled this period, he was required to enter both the start and the end of the interval when asking the question: "the period 9 April 1975 to 8 April 1976".

15. The main problems encountered during the administration of the question are (a) respondents are sometimes prone to include the occurrance of an event that took place outside the reference period; and (b) omit to include relevant events that took place within the period. The reasons for these mistakes emanate from confusion with the reference period.

16. The attempts by the African countries mentioned above that used concrete intervals rather than the abstract 12 months were aimed at minimizing these problems. However, in most cases they introduced errors of their own. The main problem was that the reference period selected was usually less than 12 months, which means births for the remaining period had to be prorated assuming a linear rate of growth. This was the approach used in Botswana (1981).

17. "When the number of days in a year was divided by the number of days in this period, a raising factor of 1.0992 was obtained. The seasonality patterns of births are not known, but the above method of obtaining the raising factor assumed that births and deaths occur at uniform rates throughout the year". Therefore, the technique might result in either over-or under-estimates of births, since seasonal patterns were disregarded.

4/ E. Van de Walle, "Characteristics of African Demographic Data" in W. Brass et alia, The Demography of Tropical Africa, (Princeton, N.J.:Princeton University Press, 1968) Chapter 2.

18. Moreover as Van de Walle has observed in the evaluation of the earlier experimentation with this question, it is impossible to ascertain whether respondents are more easily able to distinguish time intervals in terms of lunar months, between the period of the celebration of independence etc., compared with calendar months 5/ .

Date of last live birth

19. Recently in place of the question on births within a specified reference period, another question on date of last live birth has been included in the censuses and surveys conducted in some African countries. This question was included in the census questionnaires of Angola (1981), Burundi (1979), Gambia (1983), Kenya (1979), Lesotho (1976), Mauritius (1972), Sierra Leone (1974), Somalia (1975), Sudan (1975), Swaziland (1976), Tanzania (1978), Zambia (1980) and Zimbabwe (1982).

20. The question usually consists of two parts - the date of birth of the last live birth to be given in both months and years and whether the child survived. As births that occur in the most recent period that is up to two or three years before the census or survey are the events of interest, it is imperative that information be provided for both months and years for them.

21. In Tanzania, however in the pre-coded questionnaire used for the 1978 census, provision was made for only the year of the last live birth. Since the census took place towards the end of August, only birth for about eight months were accounted for in 1978. To get estimates of births for the 12 months prior to the census, a linear interpolation technique had to be used. As was observed with respect to the discussion on the question on births within the preceding 12 months, the use of a linear interpolation method results in either over or under estimation of births, as the formula disregards the patterns of seasonal variations of the event.

22. More generally, because this question must be asked of every woman and also because attention must focus on the last live birth, the probability for women to provide positive responses is high 6/ . In view of these considerations, this question may obtain a higher rate of reported births than the question on births within a specified period.

B. Concepts, Definitions and Classifications: Mortality

23. Most of the concepts, definitions and classifications discussed on fertility have some relevance for mortality as well. Therefore, the description that follows will emphasise subjects not previously discussed and problems of concepts, definitions and classifications peculiar to mortality. The selected concepts on mortality that will be discussed are as follows:

- Children ever born alive classified into (a) those dead and (b) surviving
- Deaths occurring in a specified recent period, usually 12 or 24 months preceding the census or survey
- Date of last death
- Paternal orphanhood

5/ Van de Walle, op. cit.

6/ UNECA and UNESCO, Manual on Demographic Sample Surveys in Africa, (September 1974), Chapter 5.

Children ever born alive - number among dead

24. It has become the practice in inquiries that when a question on children ever born is included it should be classified into two categories - (a) children surviving and (b) children dead. Because it is free of dating errors, this question is usually considered capable of improving the information on vital events. But recall lapse problems (for example, older women forgeting children that died soon after birth or those that have grown up and live away from home) have to be contended with, more so because the reference period is longer. Some of these errors can be minimized by asking for information separately for boys and girls and also about the age at the time of death.

Deaths occurring during the last 12 months

25. The question has been included since the 1950s in the censuses and surveys of African countries, although in recent years the practice is on the decline. **Countries** that included the question on births within a recent period, for example Botswana (1981), Cameroon (1976), Congo (1974), Liberia (1974), Mali (1976), Mauritania (1976/77) and Senalia (1975), also included a similar question about deaths. The question is susceptible to errors (mainly recall lapse and time misplacement of the events) that affect retrospective questions such as those that relate to time reference. In addition, the death question is particularly prone to problems of omissions because of the following factors: taboos about mentioning the names of dead persons; a child dying soon after birth before making an impact on the family; and the household of the deceased breaking up on the occasion of the death of say the head.

26. To minimize omissions, other details about the deceased are asked such as the sex and age. However, even with the inclusion of these other proving questions, the information derived is often considered a conservative measurement of actual rates.

Date of last death

27. The question is similar to that on fertility, namely, the women's last live birth. This question causes problems in inquiries because of the following reasons. Firstly, some omissions are bound to occur in the cases of households that disintegrate on the death of say a strategic member or by migration. Secondly, sometimes the period which respondents may be asked to recall can be quite long so that the answers are affected by recall lapse and wrong dating of the event.

28. It is the considered view of some authors that this question did not provide satisfactory results in the African countries that have used it. 7/ As a result its continued usage is not recommended.

29. In the 1970 and 1980 rounds of African censuses, Tunisia (1975), Burundi 1979) and Comoros (1980) included on their questionnaires. Burundi and Comoros required not just the date of the last death, but also the dates of all other deaths in the household.

7/ UNECA and UNESCO, op. cit. p. 51.

Paternal orphanhood 8/

30. A question (i.e. whether a person's father is alive) has been included in censuses and surveys to provide alternative estimates of adult mortality. The origins of this question emanate from dissatisfaction with other techniques for the estimations of adult mortality such as the use of single parameter model life tables selected in order to coincide with infant and child mortality estimates from the questions on cumulative mortality; along with gross under-reporting from the question on deaths within the past 12 months and intercensal survival rates compromised by misreporting.

31. In recent years, this question was included in the census questionnaires of Angola (1981), Comoros (1980), Djibouti (1983), Gambia (1983), Sierra Leone (1974), Sudan (1983), Swaziland (1976) Tanzania (1978), and Zimbabwe (1982).

32. An evaluation of African experience with the technique identified the following sources of errors - the usage of the term "father" or "mother" to designate not just natural but also foster parents. 9/ This problem can be eliminated by the inclusion of more proving questions to identify biological parents.

33. More generally, if mortality has been falling prior to the inquiry a situation existing in some African countries, estimates derived from the technique might not reflect the position at the time of the inquiry.

C. Concepts, Definitions and Classifications: Migration

34. The selected concepts, definitions and classifications on migration that will be examined in this section, are as follows:

- The concept of migrations
- Place of birth
- Duration of residence
- Place of previous residence
- Place of residence at a fixed prior date

The concept of migration

35. Migration is a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose proper description should take account of both space and time. This has created definitional and conceptual problems as distance and time are based on a continuum. Small wonder that "there is little uniformity among, and even within, countries ... in the definition of an internal migrant" 10/. With respect to space, migration

8/ J.G.C. Blacker, "The Estimation of Adult Mortality in Africa from Data on Orphanhood", Population Studies, Vol 31 No. 1 (March 1977) pp. 107-128. The technique to extract usable information from the question whether a person's mother is alive has yet to be refined.

9/ Blacker, idem.

10/ United Nations, Statistics on Internal Migration: A Technical Report Studies in Methods, Series F No. 23 (New York: 1978).

involves simultaneously two localities: (a) an area of origin and (b) an area of destination 11/. Other spatial concepts that have been used for the definition of migration include physical distance, type of origin/destination, especially whether urban or rural and economic opportunity.

36. Usually, an internal migrant has been defined as one who crosses a geographical or political (administrative) boundary.

37. The difficulty with the temporal aspects of the definitions of migration centres around the length of stay continuously in the destination or absence from the origin. For some authors migration must involve a sustained or permanent relocation in the place of destination. For example, according to Mangalam, migration is "a relatively permanent moving away of a collectivity called migrants, from the geographical location to another... " 12/ Some aspects of population movements, for example, circulation, are not covered by this definition.

38. Other authors have argued that the time period required to quality as a migrant should be inflexible and be determined for each individual case, taking into account the purpose of the data collection. Reference time intervals from six months up to ten years have been employed in migration surveys or censuses.

39. On the face of it, the use of physical distance appears ideal for the identification of migrations, with a move of some specified distance considered as migration. But this approach is not without problems 13/. Firstly, the information on spatial movements are not usually presented in forms that can be easily converted to distance spanned. As a matter of fact, if even the data is available, its processing and tabulation would be very formidable and probably not worth the effort.

40. A type of migration in African countries that is of great interest is rural-to-urban movements. The classification of origin and destination localities as rural/urban presents some definitional problems. One type of classification scheme frequently used is a population size threshold. Since over time rural/urban localities change status by natural increase, migration and reclassifications, analysis involving more than one time period cannot usually keep abreast of these changes. Also if respondents are asked to classify their origin localities as rural or urban, the answers invariably will be affected by memory lapse especially on the part of long-term migrants who have not kept pace with changes of various localities. Some mis-representations of rural places as urban is also possible.

11/ W.T.S. Gould and R.M. Prothero, "Space and Time in African Population Mobility" in L.A. Kosinski and R.M. Prothero (eds) People on the Move: Studies of Internal Migration (London Methuen:1975), pp. 39-50.

12/ J.J. Mangalam, Human Migrations (Lexington, 1968) p. 5.

13/ United Nations, Methods of Measuring Internal Migration (New York 1970) Manual VI, ST/SOA/Series A/7.

41. Locations reclassifications as urban is fraught with problems in surveys, where usually the reference spatial unit is given in terms of an administrative unit (e.g. districts or provinces). 14/ From the information provided it is difficult to classify at the office origin locations as urban or rural since the reference units comprise entire administrative units.

42. The complexities connected with the definition of migration have increased because in addition to the criteria on distance and time, other factors have been emphasized, especially in sample surveys. These include intentions as to the permanence or temporal character of the move, changes in milieu or environment, whether with move occurs over a labour market and reasons for the move. 15/

African Usages of Concepts, Classifications and Definitions

43. In many African countries, for census purposes, for which a single question on place of birth is included, a migrant is usually defined as a person whose place of enumeration is different from place of birth, typically an administrative unit. When supplementary questions such as place of usual residence, duration of residence, and place of previous residence are also included, a migrant has been defined as a person whose residence is not the same as the locality of enumeration for a time span less than his age or who lived in years in a locality different from his place of residence at the time of the census or survey.

44. Sample surveys provide the latitude for more careful definitions of migration. For example, Caldwell has suggested the following classification scheme for migrants and non-migrants. 16/

(a) Has never migrated to town
(b) Seasonal migrants
(c) Permanent returnee
(d) More permanent rural-urban migrant.

14/ I. Masser and W.T.S. Gould, Interregional Migration in Tropical Africa (London: Institute of British Geographers).

15/ Gordon F. De Jong and Robert W. Gardiner (eds.) Migration Decision making (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981).

16/ J.C. Cadlwell, African Rural-Urban Migration: The movement to Ghana's Towns (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

45. Similarly, Toussai (1971) has proposed both a typology of migrants as well as the delineation of residence rules to distinguish the following groups: (a) Resident-having employment, use of land/or intention to establish residence for a period of one year or more; (b) sojourners - attending school or looking for job or absent for four months or more; (c) visitors - comprise those who are away from their residence for less than four months but not for work or schooling. 17/

46. Some countries stipulate a minimum time span for a movement to qualify as migration. For example in Nigeria for a movement from one place to be called "migration", a migrant should have stayed continuously in his new area for at least 6 months before the reference date. 18/

47. This same threshold value was adopted in a rural-urban migration survey conducted in Sierra Leone (1974/75). Here a person was considered a migrant if he had resided in an area "for longer than six months". 19/

48. A shorter time span was employed in a study of Lagos: this study defined any person who has moved in or out of the sample area of Lagos for more than 31 days as a migrant.

Place of birth

49. The question on birthplace is the most widely used to acquire information on internal migration in censuses. To get the information a question such as "Where was this person born?" is included, to be investigated of all persons in the census.

50. A migrant is a person that is enumerated in a place different from the place where he was born, and a non-migrant is one who is enumerated in the place where he was born.

51. The magnitude of the migratory movements depends on whether it is the village, town, district, lower or highest administrative divisions that is used as the reference spatial units.

52. The advantages of this question include its ease of understanding by the respondent. The question also enables migration information to be provided by geographical units on such items as lifetime in-migration by place of origin, lifetime out-migration by place of destination.

53. The major disadvantage is that it is not time specific. This disadvantage assumes importance for various analyses on differential, assimilation and consequences of migration, as the characteristics and motivations of recent migrants (say with duration of stay of about 5 years) will definitely be different from long-term (say 10 or 15 or more years of residence).

17/ Louis Roussel "Replacement temporaire et migrations", Demographie compte: Afrique Noire, Madagascar, Comoros Vol. 2 ORSTOM/INSEE/INED (Paris: Delegation general a la recherche scientifique, 1971

18/ UNECA Manual of Demographic concepts and definitions, Addis Ababa, 1979

19/ D. Boyeles et alia, "Rural-urban migration in Sierra Leone: Determinants and policy implications", Michigan State University, 1976, African rural employment working paper, No.13.

54. Another short-coming of the question is that it assumes a single movement directly from the locality of birth to the present destination, the area of enumeration. Also return migration cannot be inferred from the collected information.

55. Although questions on birth-place appeared on the census questionnaires of some former British colonies, these were not fully exploited for information on internal migration: "The questions on birth-place that were included in colonial censuses were treated as subordinate to questions on tribal affiliations as indicators of migration patterns and the data were not used in published tabulations, except to establish de jure populations for regions and to establish the total numbers born outside the region of enumeration and thereby to provide some indications of the extent of net migration". 20/

56. This applies to those areas of the country where enumeration of the population involved the completion of individual schedules, as opposed to an administrative type of count. The latter procedure was used to estimate, for example, the population of the Protectorate of Sierra Leone and thus for such areas no information on birth-place was available.

57. The birth-place question has become one of the basic sources of internal migration information from censuses conducted since independence. The question was first included in the 1960 census of Ghana: subsequently several African countries, e.g., (Sierra Leone (1963), Malawi (1966) and Tanzania (1967) followed suit.

58. While the usage of the birth-place question has become popular in many countries, certain fundamental differences could be discerned in the methods of collection, analysis and tabulation of this item, as the table below shows.

Country	Date	Form of enumeration of birthplace question	No. of specified birthplace	No. of birthplace by residence tabulation	Others
Ghana	1960	All	7 - town or village	7	
Sierra Leone	1963	All	148	143	
Malawi	1966	All	24		
Tanzania	1967	All urban;20% rural areas	19	67	
Uganda	1969	All urban;10% rural areas	18	21	
Kenya	1969	All urban;10% rural areas	41	8	
Zambia	1969	All	43	43	
Ghana	1970	All	9 - town or village		

Source" 1. Masser and W.T.S. Gould, Inter-regional Migration in Tropical Africa op cit.

20/ Gould and Masser, Op. cit.

59. Differences exist in the choice of the area unit for the collection and/or tabulation of the data. In Ghana, for example, the relevant spatial units for tabulation were the seven major administrative divisions of the country, though the collected information offered the opportunity for tabulations covering smaller areal units. In Sierra Leone, the data was collected and published for the smallest administrative units, the 148 chiefdoms. In the Eastern Africa countries of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, the birthplace question was not asked of all population groups. Rather, portions of the country, urban/rural, were selected for this question. Therefore, the tabulated information from these countries, covered only limited spatial units.

60. Another item of variation is in the definition of the concept itself. The majority of countries define birthplace as the physical place of birth. However, a smaller number, consider the birthplace as the usual residence of the mother of the respondent. For example, in Malawi, the two types of definitions have been used. Whereas, for the 1966 population census, the birthplace was defined as the physical place of birth, for the 1977 census, it was defined as the usual residence of the person's mother at the time of birth. 21/

61. Given the importance of rural-urban migration in many African countries, the birthplace data has sometimes been classified for the two sectors. For example in Sudan, the place of birth for the native population was classified into rural and urban as well as nomadic, for census purposes.

62. Classification of the migration data into urban and rural origins and destinations is invaluable for studies on this topic. However, the classification scheme presents some problems especially for censuses that employ an agglomeration rather than an administrative criterion for the definition of urban. If names of localities rather than the civil divisions are entered on the census form, the coding and processing of this item would be elaborated and time consuming. In any case, these have to be classified under subgroupings such as the civil divisions for any meaningful tabulation scheme. Thus, in practice, civil divisions are used for the recording of the birthplace information. From the data it is difficult to classify the localities of origin into urban or rural.

63. In Sierra Leone, for example, the reference unit for the birthplace question for both the 1963 and 1974 censuses were the 148 chiefdoms, the smallest administrative divisions. (The names of the localities were only entered when a person did not remember the name of the chiefdom). From the information it proved difficult to classify origin places as urban or rural.

64. A similar problem occured in Tanzania. Cleason and Egero in their study of in-migration to urban areas using the 1967 population census data, were unable to clearly distinguish rural from urban migration. 22/

21/ UNECA, Manual of Demographic Concepts and Definitions, op cit.

22/ C. Claeson and B. Egero, "Population movement in Tanzania: An analysis of Birthplace Data in the 1967 Population Census" (Dar-es-Salaam: University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1971.

65. A minor problem for the birthplace question is accurately providing their names for members of the households who are absent at the time of the interview and about whom the respondent does not know much about, e.g., lodgers.

Place of previous residence

66. This question enables information to be acquired on the last moves of migrants. A migrant is a person whose last locality of residence is different from his/her locality of enumeration, his/her current residence. A non-migrant is a person who has lived in his/her current residence, the place of enumeration all his life.

67. The question is very similar to that on place of birth, with the major exception that it provides information on direct moves. Thus its main defect is that it is not time specific with reference to the move.

68. The question on place of previous residence has been asked in two ways in African countries. For the first type, the date of the previous census or survey, is used as the reference point. Whereas for the other version of the question, the time reference for the previous residence is specified.

69. For example in Algeria, for their 1977 census, a question was asked about locality of residence at the time of the previous census in 1966. In Zambia the time reference was a year prior to the census: "where were you living this time last year". In Tunisia for the 1975 census, a question was asked about previous place of residence in 1969, i.e., about six years prior to the 1975 census

Duration of residence

70. Data on internal migration in a census is also provided by including a question on duration of residence, such as, "How long have you been living in this place?" Migrants consist of (a) persons born in the locality of enumeration who have resided in another locality at any time since birth; and (b) persons born outside the locality of enumeration. A non-migrant is a person who has lived in the locality of enumeration since birth.

71. Alternatively, migrants have been classified in countries that have included the duration of residence question on their census questionnaires on the basis of the birthplace question. The question on the duration of residence has been included, in these cases, in order to aid in the classification of lifetime migrants into different duration cohorts.

72. The advantages of this question include the possibility to acquire information on return migration and the timing of the last move.

73. The major shortcoming of this question is that it does not provide information on place of origin, thus impossible to infer about out-migration or differentiate in-migrants from immigrants.

74. The question on duration of residence allows the distribution of migrants into different temporal categories. The African experience with the use of this question include problems encountered in relating "the question of definition of duration in respect of respondents whose residence has been interrupted by periods of absence on studies or temporary assignment elsewhere. In general most African countries adopted the rule that where an absence was for less than six months at a time did not interrupt the duration of residence at any given time but where it was six months or more than this was regarded as interrupting the period of residence at the given place". 23/ Since this question also involved dating, the problem of recall lapse could compromise some answers, especially when the date of the duration of residence occurs sometime in the distant past.

23/ UNECA, "Study on the Methods and Problems of the 1970 Round of African Population and Housing Censuses" (Addis Ababa:1977) E/CN.14/CAS.10/15.